

BAR Meeting
April 7, 2010

ISSUE: Alterations

APPLICANT: Andrew H. Macdonald

LOCATION: 217 North Columbus Street

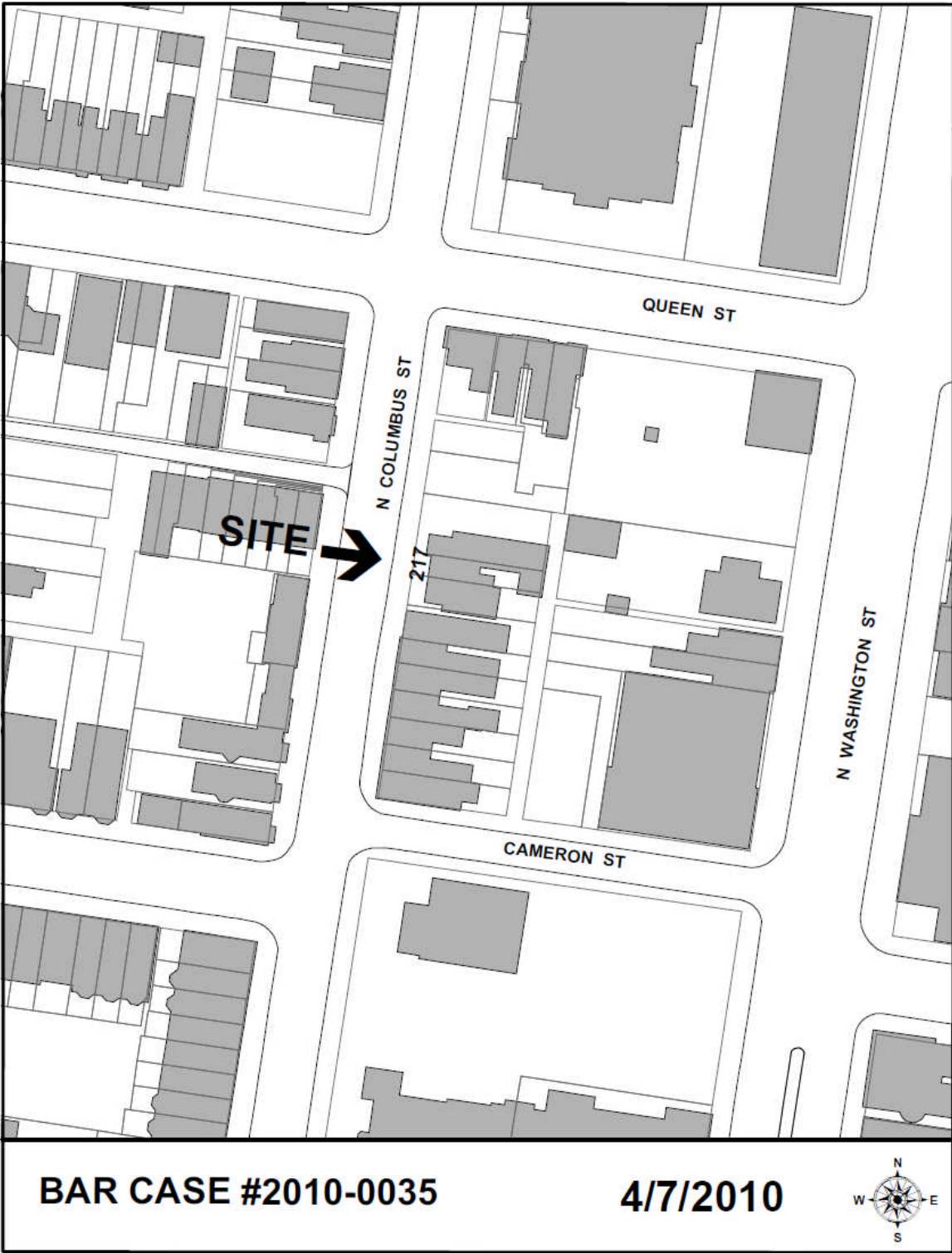
ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the muntins on the new windows have fixed, glued exterior muntin with a profile;
2. That the fiber cement siding be smooth and that the nails not show in the installation; and,
3. That the following archaeology conditions shall appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Basement/Foundation Plans, Demolition, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements:
 - A. The applicant/developer shall call Alexandria Archaeology (703/838-4399) two weeks before the starting date of any ground disturbance so that a monitoring and inspection schedule for city archaeologists can be arranged.
 - B. The applicant/developer shall call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds.
 - C. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection or artifact collection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology

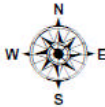
***EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE:** In accordance with Sections 10-106(B) and 10-206(B) of the Zoning Ordinance, any official Board of Architectural Review approval will expire 12 months from the date of BAR approval if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of that 12-month period.

****BUILDING PERMIT NOTE:** Most projects approved by the Board of Architectural Review require the issuance of one or more construction permits by Building and Fire Code Administration (including signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Administration, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-838-4360 for further information.



BAR CASE #2010-0035

4/7/2010



I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations to the garage at 217 North Columbus Street. The Board approved the demolition of the garage at their March 17, 2010 meeting (BAR Case #2010-0015), but with the retention of some of the building materials to be used in the construction of a new studio/shed with passive solar glazing.

The footprint of the studio/shed will measure 14 feet deep by 11 feet wide and will be within the footprint of the larger 15 foot deep by 14.5 foot wide garage. Additional open space – approximately 78 square feet – will be gained in the rear yard and in the newly created 3 foot 6 inch horse wide alley located in the rear yard between 217 and 215 North Columbus Street. The structure will also be 1 foot lower in height than the existing garage. Instead of having an east sloping shed roof like the existing roof, the studio/shed will have a 36 degree, south sloping roof. Two 185 watt solar panels, measuring a combined 6 feet by 5 feet, will be mounted on the highest part of the roof. A fixed glass skylight will also be installed on the roof.

The west elevation of the studio/shed facing the garden and the rear of the house will have sliding patio doors and a single 2 foot by 2 foot, four-light window. The south elevation will also have a single four-light window measuring 6 feet by 3 feet. The east elevation of the studio/shed faces the private alley and will have 2 four-light windows of different size, one measuring 2 feet by 2 feet and the other measuring 4 feet by 3 feet. The garage will have a standing seam metal roof and will be clad with Hardieplank siding. The windows will be fiberglass, manufactured by Serious Windows, an energy efficient window company. The applicant has not decided what style of windows will be installed (double-hung, awning, casement, etc.).

The applicant will also install a 6 foot, flush board wood fence with a horizontal cap on the south property line where the previous garage was located, as well as a matching gate at the rear of the property. The applicant will either paint or stain the wood fence. Because this structure is in the middle of the block and the alley is private, very little of the structure will be visible to the public after the fence is constructed.

The applicant has indicated a willingness to preserve the old cistern associated with the early 19th century sugar refinery and warehouse that previously occupied the site and still exists under the garage foundation.

II. HISTORY:

The two-story, two-bay frame townhouse at 217 North Columbus Street is a townhouse originally constructed in 1886 in a Queen Anne style. It is the center unit of three attached townhouses (along with 215 and 217 North Columbus Street) which were built by T.H. Crilly and design by Glenn Brown, according to a notice in the Alexandria Gazette, April 14, 1886. Brown (1854-1932) is arguably one of the most influential architects of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Only the front façade of the adjacent townhouse at 219 North Columbus Street is largely unaltered from Brown's design, while the subject property and 215 North Columbus

Street were both significantly altered in the early 1970s (the BAR approved the remodel of 217 North Columbus Street on September 20, 1972 and 215 North Columbus Street on April 19, 1972). The alterations essentially removed all of the original character-defining Queen Anne details.

According to Alexandria Archaeology, the lot at 217 N. Columbus Street has potential to yield significant archaeological resources with an ability to provide insight into domestic, industrial, and military activities. The property is on the city block that contains the Lloyd House, built around 1798 by John Wise at the corner of Queen and Washington Streets. This house was leased to Charles Lee (Attorney General under the administrations of Washington and Adams), James Marshall (brother of Chief Justice John Marshall), and Nicholas Fitzhugh (a circuit court judge) during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, and the current development lot could contain artifacts associated with these early residents. In 1810, Wise sold the property to Jacob Hoffman, a merchant and former mayor of Alexandria. Hoffman built a sugar refinery and warehouse on the block that fronted on N. Washington Street. The current development lot would have been located in the rear yard of the sugar refinery structures. By 1832, Benjamin Hallowell, a Quaker educator, had adapted the structures for use as the Alexandria Boarding School, which served as a hospital during the Civil War. A Civil War Quartermaster's map shows a dead house and other structures in the vicinity of the development lot. In January 2010, Alexandria Archaeology recorded the presence of a brick shaft in the garage on this lot; it was partially disturbed by the replacement of a broken sewer line at that time.

Staff's research of the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps suggests that between 1896 and 1902 there was a continuous, one-story accessory structure with a shingle roof at the rear of all three adjoining properties at 217, 215 and 219 North Columbus Street. However, in 1941, the footprint of the structure is larger and it is identified with an "A", which stands for automobile. There has, therefore, been a continuous history of outbuildings in this location on the site.

BAR and Building Permit Approvals

In 2006, the applicant submitted an application for a Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate and a Certificate for Appropriateness in order to demolish the garage, as well as portions of the rear of the house, to construct a rear addition (BAR Case #2006-00279 & 280). The application was withdrawn prior to the hearing.

On March 17, 2010, the BAR approved a Permit to Demolish for the one-and-a-half story frame garage at 217 North Columbus Street (BAR Case #2010-0015).

In the past 20 years, Staff has administratively approved three building permits for the subject property:

BLD 1995-01121: Reroof the flat garage roof – which is not visible from the right-of-way – with rubber membrane roofing.

- BLD 1999-00969: Reroof the gable roof portion of the house with a new, historically appropriate, standing seam metal tern roof.
- BLD 2007-01658: Installation of a skylight requiring less than 25 square feet of demolition in a location not visible from the public right-of-way.

III. ANALYSIS:

The project to demolish the existing garage and replace it with a smaller studio/ shed using recycled materials complies with the RM zone regulations. The existing garage is a noncomplying structure (Zoning staff approved the applicant's 'Replacement of a Noncomplying Structure' application on February 16, 2010).

As recommended in the *Design Guidelines* chapter on accessory structures and outbuilding, the proposed studio/shed will complement, not compete with, the architecture of the main building. The *Guidelines* also recommend that: "The materials of accessory structure should follow the historic usage of materials." While the roof of the new structure will be standing seam metal, both the windows and the siding will be constructed using synthetic materials. Staff supports the use of fiber cement siding (Hardieplank), as well as the fiberglass windows, on the new studio/shed because they are consistent with the Board's policy of approving synthetic materials on new construction and additions and they will be minimally visible, if at all. One recommendation the Board consistently makes is that the siding be smooth and that the nails not show in the installation. The studio/shed fronts a private alley, so the visibility of the materials will be difficult – if not impossible – to perceive. Staff's only recommendation in regard to the windows is that the muntins be applied to the exterior of the glass and not internal to the insulated glass. Flat plastic or snap in muntins are strongly discouraged in the *Design Guidelines*.

Staff recommends approval of the application with the recommendations described above, and including the conditions of Alexandria Archaeology.

STAFF:

Stephanie Sample, Planner III
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager

IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Legend: C - code requirement R - recommendation S - suggestion F- finding

Code Administration:

- C-1 All exterior walls within 5 feet from an interior property line shall have a fire resistance rating of 1 hour, from both sides of the wall. As alternative, a 2 hour fire wall may be provided. This condition is also applicable to skylights within setback distance. Openings in exterior walls between 3 and 5 feet shall not exceed 25% of the area of the entire wall surface (This shall include bay windows). Openings shall not be permitted in exterior walls within 3 feet of an interior lot line.
- C-2 Prior to the issuance of a demolition permit or land disturbance permit, a rodent abatement plan shall be submitted to Code Enforcement that will outline the steps that will taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.
- C-3 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- C-4 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.
- C-5 New construction must comply with the 2006 edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-6 Construction permits are required for this project. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully details the construction as well as layouts and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems. Five sets of plans, must accompany the written application. The plans must include all dimensions, construction alterations details, kitchen equipment, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical layouts and schematics.
- C-7 Permission from adjacent property owners is required if access to the adjacent properties is required to complete the proposed construction. Otherwise, a plan shall be submitted to demonstrate the construction techniques utilized to keep construction solely on the referenced property.
- C-8 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.

Transportation and Environmental Services:

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. The building permit plans shall comply with requirements of City Code Section 8-1-22 regarding the location of downspouts, foundation drains and sump pumps. Refer to Memorandum to Industry dated June 18, 2004. [Memorandum is available online at the City web site under Transportation\Engineering and Design\Memos to Industry.]. (T&ES)
- R2. Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)
- R3. All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design. (T&ES)
- R4. No permanent structure may be constructed over any existing private and/or public utility easements. It is the responsibility of the applicant to identify any and all existing easements on the plan. (T&ES)
- R5. An erosion and sediment control plan must be approved by T&ES prior to any land disturbing activity greater than 2,500 square feet. (T&ES)
- R6. Compliance with the provisions of Article XIII of the City's zoning ordinance for stormwater quality control is required for any land disturbing activity greater than 2,500 square feet. (T&ES)

FINDING

- F1. An approved grading plan may be required at the time of building permit application. Insufficient information has been provided to make that determination at this time. In summary, City Code Section 8-1-22(d) requires that a grading plan be submitted to and approved by T&ES prior to the issuance of building permits for improvements involving:
- the construction of a new home;
 - construction of an addition to an existing home where either
 - the addition exceeds the area of the existing building footprint by 100% or more;
 - or, the construction of the addition results in less than 50% of the existing first floor exterior walls, in their entirety, remaining;
 - changes to existing grade elevation of 1-foot or greater;
 - changes to existing drainage patterns;
 - land disturbance of 2,500 square feet or greater.
- Questions regarding the processing of grading plans should be directed to the T&ES Site Plan Coordinator at (703) 838-4318. Memorandum to Industry No. 02-08 was issued on April 28, 2008 and can be viewed online via the following link.
- <http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/tes/info/gradingPlanRequirements.pdf>**

CITY CODE REQUIREMENTS

- C-1 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Solid Waste Control, Title 5, Chapter 1, which sets forth the requirements for the recycling of materials (Sec. 5-1-99).
- C-2 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Noise Control Code, Title 11, Chapter 5, which sets the maximum permissible noise level as measured at the property line.
- C-3 Roof, surface and sub-surface drains be connected to the public storm sewer system, if available, by continuous underground pipe. Where storm sewer is not available applicant must provide a design to mitigate impact of stormwater drainage onto adjacent properties and to the satisfaction of the Director of Transportation & Environmental Services. (Sec.8-1-22)
- C-4 All secondary utilities serving this site shall be placed underground. (Sec. 5-3-3)
- C-5 Pay sanitary sewer tap fee prior to release of Grading Plan. (Sec. 5-6-25)
- C-6 Any work within the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-3-61)

Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 The lot at 217 N. Columbus Street has potential to yield significant archaeological resources with an ability to provide insight into domestic, industrial, and military activities. The property is on the city block that contains the Lloyd House, built around 1798 by John Wise at the corner of Queen and Washington Streets. This house was leased to Charles Lee (Attorney General under the administrations of Washington and Adams), James Marshall (brother of Chief Justice John Marshall), and Nicholas Fitzhugh (a circuit court judge) during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, and the current development lot could contain artifacts associated with these early residents. In 1810, Wise sold the property to Jacob Hoffman, a merchant and former mayor of Alexandria. Hoffman built a sugar refinery and warehouse on the block that fronted on N. Washington Street. The current development lot would have been located in the rear yard of the sugar refinery structures. By 1832, Benjamin Hallowell, a Quaker educator, had adapted the structures for use as the Alexandria Boarding School, which served as a hospital during the Civil War. A Civil War Quartermaster's map shows a dead house and other structures in the vicinity of the development lot. In January 2010, Alexandria Archaeology recorded the presence of a brick shaft in the garage on this lot; it was partially disturbed by the replacement of a broken sewer line at that time.
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- *R-3. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection or artifact collection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.
- R-4. The statements in archaeology conditions above marked with an asterisk "*" shall appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Basement/Foundation Plans, Demolition, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements.

V. IMAGES

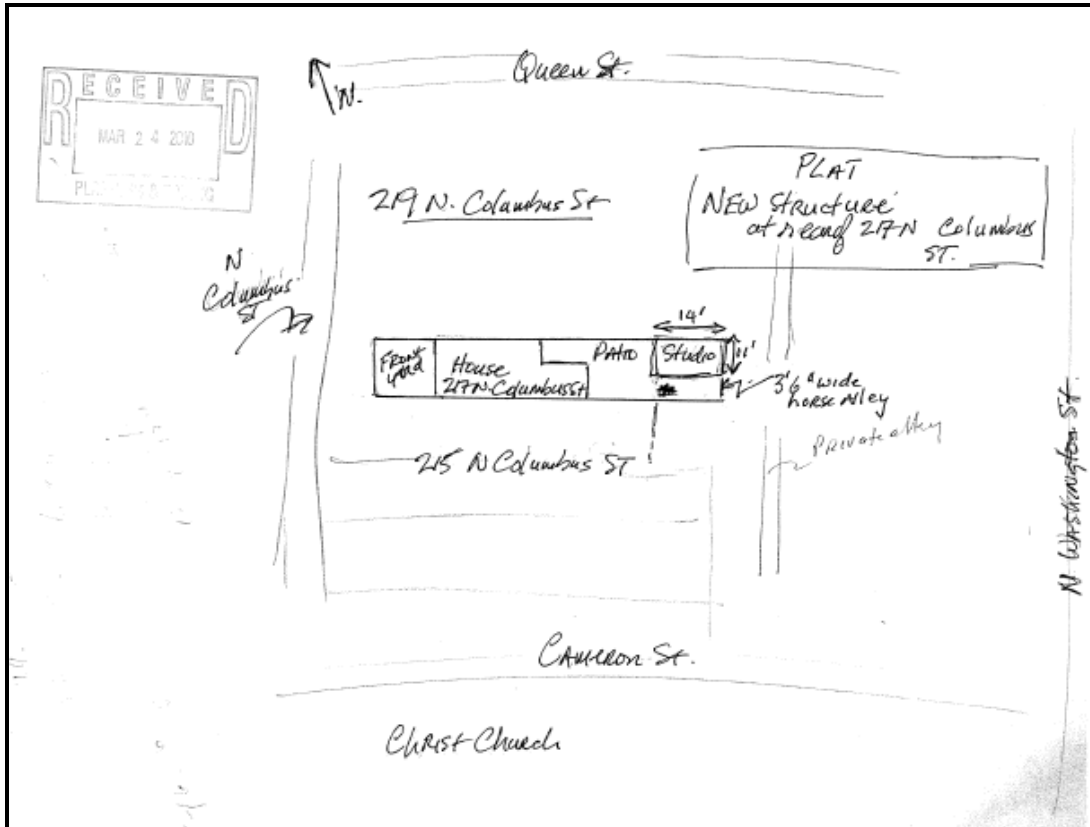


Figure 1: Sketch of Proposed Plat

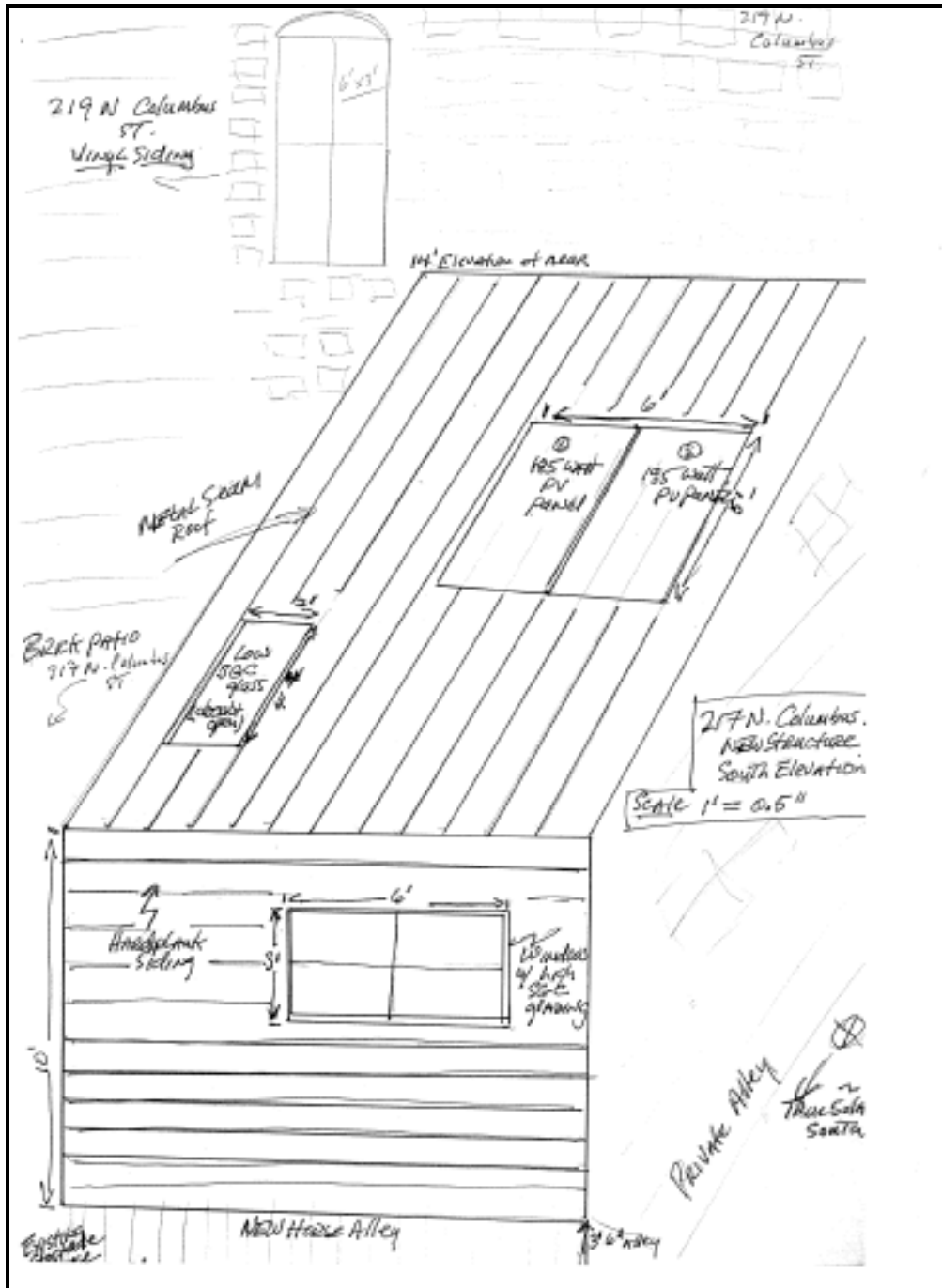


Figure 2: Proposed Structure South Elevation

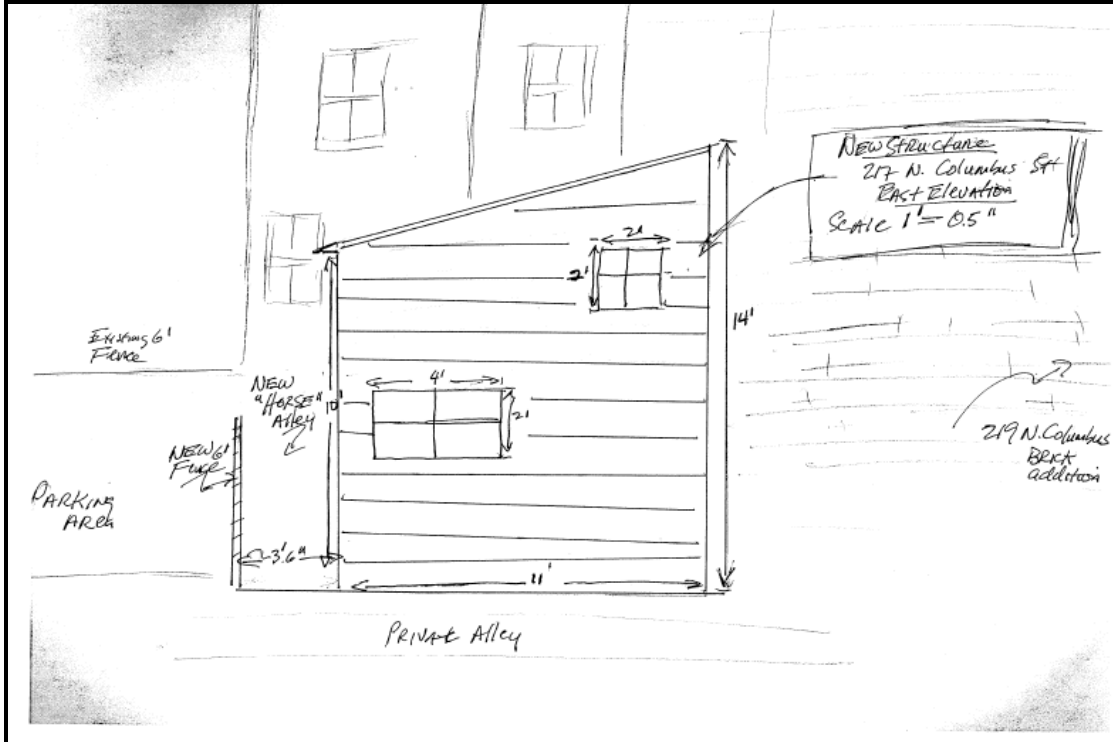


Figure 3: Proposed Structure East Elevation

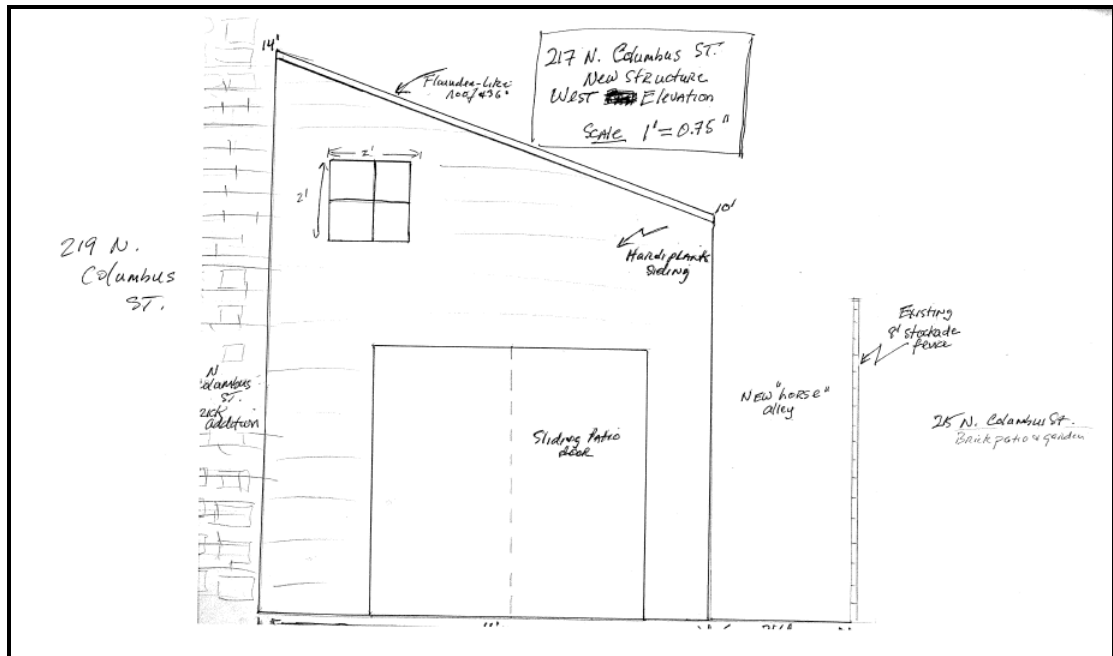


Figure 4: Proposed Structure West Elevation